

## **MINUTES – ZONING BOARD – September 27, 2021**

**The Cranford Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting scheduled for Monday, September 27, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. was conducted virtually in order to avoid potential impacts from Covid-19.**

This meeting is in compliance with the “Open Public Meetings Act” as adequate notice of this meeting has been provided to the Westfield Leader and the Star Ledger with the agenda specifying the time, place and matters to be heard having been posted on a bulletin Board in the Town Hall reserved for such announcements and the filing of said agenda with the Township Clerk of Cranford. Formal action may be taken at this meeting.

The workshop portion of the meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Ms. Daly, Chair.

### **ROLL CALL:**

#### **Members Present:**

Ms. Daly  
Mr. Aschenbach  
Mr. Ashrafi  
Mr. Lucas  
Mr. Quinn  
Mr. Salomon

#### **Members Absent:**

Mr. Marotta

#### **Alternates Present:**

Ms. Oliver  
Mr. Rees

#### **Alternates Absent:**

Also in attendance: for Mark Rothman, Esq., Kathy Lenahan, Board Administrator, Jacqueline Dirmann, Board Engineer

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

### **MINUTES:**

None

### **RESOLUTIONS:**

None

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Daly stated that the October 4<sup>th</sup> Zoning Board meeting is being cancelled.

The workshop portion of the meeting concluded at 7:35 p.m.

**PUBLIC PORTION:**

A public meeting of the Cranford Board of Adjustment was called to order by Ms. Daly on September 27, 2021 at: 7:45 p.m. via Google Meet. Ms. Daly announced in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Open Public Meetings Act, the Westfield Leader and the Star Ledger have been notified and the agenda posted in the municipal building as required.

Ms. Daly explained the protocol, purpose and procedure that will be followed during the hearing.

1. Application #ZBA 21-009  
Applicant: James & Kacie Peluso  
26 Mendell Avenue  
Block: 549 Lot: 26, R-4 Zone

The applicant is requesting a c(2) variance for the expansion of their existing garage to make the family room at rear of garage a more usable space. Minimum front yard setback required is 25 ft. and 18 ft. is proposed §255-34 Attachment 1, Schedule 1.

Rich Pierce appeared and was sworn in. He presented his qualifications and was accepted as an expert in the field of Architecture.

Mr. Pierce stated the applicants are looking to expand their split level. They are currently expanding their bedroom but are also looking to expand their living space. They have a small family room behind the garage. Proposing to enlarge the family room by moving the garage forward. Garage is setback about 25 feet. Stated expanding the back would be more difficult due to the rear being higher than the front and a full foundation wall. Proposing to slide the garage forward into the front yard. There are several neighbors who have already done a similar project. Would like to reduce the driveway to 18 feet and the garage would be revised to be 20 feet based on the Township's engineering comments. Initially, family room was to be 16 feet, now it will be 14 feet and garage would be 20 feet deep. Houses to left and right have done the same thing, along with house across the street.

Questions from the Board for Mr. Pierce ascertained the following:

Comment was made that the original plan with the garage being 18 feet did not comply with the ordinance, so they changed the design to have the garage be 20 feet deep to comply. Will not increase the impervious coverage. Does not have pictures of other houses or the rear of the yard. The back wall is a full foundation wall and removing that would be a major issue. Does not feel it is a detriment to either neighbor. Reviewed the revised design showing the wall that has been moved back between the garage and the family room. It is an interior low bearing partition and will be one hour rated. Also, they will no longer have to go into the garage to access the basement. Will be able to put a car in the garage and driveway will be wide enough for two cars.

There were no questions from the Public for Mr. Pierce.

James Peluso appeared and was sworn in. Stated they moved Cranford about 4 years ago. They need to have a functioning home to provide their children with a safe, large enough space. He does have pictures of neighbors who have done the same thing. Right now, the children need to go into the garage to get to the basement, which he believes is a safety issue.

Questions from the Board for Mr. Peluso ascertained the following:

They designed the house and began the as of right construction and then filed for the variance for the bump out of garage.

Mr. Pierce clarified that the main project was as of right and they did not want to delay the main project since they might have to wait to get the variance or possibly be denied. There is zero increase in impervious coverage.

Mr. Peluso presented Exhibit A-1 which is several photos he took of similar projects done in his neighborhood. There is a side entrance on each of the homes in the photos and his will also have a side entrance. There is an existing walkway and the new side door entrance would step out onto that walkway.

There were no questions from the Public for Mr. Peluso.

Ms. Daly asked if anyone from the Public would like to make a comment on this application. No one appeared.

Mr. Pierce stated that this is making the house a more usable friendly space.

2. **DELIBERATION** of Application #ZBA 21-009  
Applicant: James & Kacie Peluso  
26 Mendell Avenue  
Block: 549 Lot: 26, R-4 Zone

The applicant is requesting a c(2) variance for the expansion of their existing garage to make the family room at rear of garage a more usable space. Minimum front yard setback required is 25 ft. and 18 ft. is proposed §255-34 Attachment 1, Schedule 1.

Board comments consisted of the following:

A more usable space would add value. Like the application. Absence of neighbors, suggests they are okay with the application. Nice thing for a family. Does not see any issue with the zoning laws, and no substantial detriment to the public good. Would be an aesthetic and personal benefit for the family.

Mr. Rothman asked Mr. Pierce if there are any objections to the Engineering Report. Mr. Pierce stated he had no objections, that the items were fairly common.

Ms. Dirmann stated there were no comments.

A motion to approve this application was made by Mr. Aschenbach, seconded by Mr. Lucas and passed on roll call vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Daly, Mr. Aschenbach, Mr. Ashrafi, Mr. Lucas, Mr. Quinn, Mr. Salomon, Ms. Oliver

Opposed: None

**PUBLIC PORTION:**

None

Ms. Daly stated the Zoning Board meeting scheduled for October 4<sup>th</sup> is cancelled and the next scheduled meeting is October 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

**CONCLUSION:**

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was regularly made, seconded and passes. The meeting concluded at 8:36 p.m.

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Daniel Aschenbach, Secretary